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LS 375L.01: Gender and Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Fiction

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Fall 2005

Gender and Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Fiction

LS 375 ENLT 375 WS 375L

Dr. Ruth Vanita

TR 9.40-11 a.m., Skaggs 336

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Office Hours: Tuesday 11-12, Thursday 2-3, and by appointment.

Texts (prescribed editions required)

1. D.H. Lawrence, Sons and Lovers (1913; Signet Classic)
2. Edith Wharton, The Age of Innocence (1920; Random House, Modern Library)
3. Virginia Woolf, Mrs Dalloway (1925; Harvest Books, Harcourt)
4. Katherine Mansfield, "A Cup of Tea" (you will receive a photocopy of this story)
5. James Baldwin, Go Tell it on the Mountain (1952; Dell Publishing)
6. Christopher Isherwood, A Single Man (1964; U of Minnesota Press)
7. Suniti Namjoshi, The Conversations of Cow (will be available shortly)
8. Jeannette Winterson, Written on the Body (1992; Vintage Books)
9. Coetzee, Disgrace (1999; Penguin)

Goals

To examine and discuss how gender and sexuality are represented and explored in major twentieth-century fiction in English. Themes include: gender roles, power conflicts, gender inequality, friendship, heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, transsexual and transgender existence, androgyny, human experience that is beyond gender. All of these will be examined as inflected by age, race, class, nationality, health, physical appearance, and intellectual capacity.

Requirements

This course entails considerable amounts of reading (eight substantial novels), and also requires upper-level writing skills. If you feel unable to do the reading, please do not take this class. If you have not yet taken a lower-division writing class, you are probably not prepared for this class.

Students are required to

(a) attend classes regularly. Please inform me in advance if you are unable to attend a class. More than two absences not explained to my satisfaction will result in a zero for attendance and participation; leaving early or coming late without explanation will be treated as an absence. Explanations must be communicated to me in person and accepted

by me. Acceptable explanations include illness (backed up by a medical certificate) and emergencies such as major sickness in the family or serious weather conditions, backed up by documentation.

(b) keep up with the assigned reading, bring the text to class, and participate in class discussions.

(c) write a one-page (typed, double-spaced) reading paper for every class. Topics will be given in advance.

(d) make a five to ten-minute class presentation on any one text, raising questions for discussion. A sign-up sheet will be circulated. The presentation may become the basis for the paper.

(e) take a mid-term examination.

(f) write a final paper (6-8 pages double-spaced typed).

(g) hand in a titled abstract for the paper, in advance, discuss the abstract with me during office hours, and revise it if necessary. The abstract must state your thesis and summarize your argument.

(h) Topics for papers must be decided in individual consultation with me. Presentations must not be summaries of the texts. They must raise questions for discussion.

Grades

The mid-term exam will be worth 20%, the final paper 20%, class attendance and participation 25%, reading papers on the texts 25%, and the presentation 10%. The final paper must be on time; late papers will not be accepted. I will be leaving the country soon after, for an international conference.

Plagiarism of any kind in any assignment will result in your failing the class and may also result in other penalties (for further details, refer to the section on Academic Misconduct in the Student Conduct Code).

If you take this course to fulfill General Education requirements or for the English or Liberal Studies majors or the Women's Studies minor, you must earn a C minus to pass; D is a failing grade.

Liberal Studies and English majors and Women's Studies minors cannot take this class Pass/Not Pass. However, if you are not one of these, and take this class Pass/Not Pass, you need to earn at least a C minus to pass since D is not a passing grade for Pass/Not Pass students.

If you have any condition, such as a physical or learning disability, that will make it difficult for you to complete the work as I have outlined it, please notify me in the first week of class.

Reading Schedule

This schedule is tentative. It is the student's responsibility to keep up with any changes.

Page numbers refer to the editions listed in this syllabus (see page 1) and sold in the UC bookstore. Please use these editions, so that we are all on the same page.

August 30 Introduction, and explanation of syllabus

September 1 Sons and Lovers, 1-79.

September 6 Sons and Lovers, 80-171

September 8 Sons and Lovers, 172-240

September 13 Sons and Lovers, 241-324

September 15 Sons and Lovers, 325-400

September 20 The Age of Innocence, 1-75

September 22 The Age of Innocence, 76-132.

September 27 The Age of Innocence, 133-199.

September 29 The Age of Innocence, 200-270

October 4 Mrs. Dalloway, 3-48

October 6 Mrs. Dalloway, 48-103

October 11 Mrs. Dalloway, 104-151

October 13 Mrs. Dalloway, 151-194 and “A Cup of Tea.”

October 13 The film, Mrs. Dalloway, will be shown at 5 p.m. in LA 106. This counts as a class, in lieu of the class on November 22. Attendance and a written response to the film are required.

October 18 **Mid-term examination**

October 20 Go Tell It On the Mountain, 11-61

October 25 Go Tell It On the Mountain, 63-150

October 27 Go Tell It On the Mountain, 151-221

November 1 A Single Man, 9-61

- November 3 A Single Man, 62-128
- November 8 A Single Man, 128-186 **Titled abstract due in class**
- November 10 The Conversations of Cow, pages 13-76. **Discuss abstract with me during office hours**
- November 15 The Conversations of Cow, pages 79-end. **Rewritten abstract due, if needed**
- November 17 Written on the Body, 1-111.
- November 22 I will be away at a conference. No class
- November 29 Written on the Body, 115-90
- December 1 Disgrace, 1-87
- December 6 Disgrace, 88-195
- December 8 Disgrace, 196-220. **Paper due in class.**